

PEOPLE AND PROBLEMS

By RALPH MCGILL

The Pace of West's Spy Efforts

Oleg Penkovsky lies a-mouldering in his grave in some unknown plot near Moscow. His body was marred by the punctures of heavy slugs fired by an official squad of executioners. A court had found him guilty of selling Soviet secrets to Western nations, especially Britain and the United States.

Oleg Penkovsky was no ordinary man. As late as 1956 he had been assistant military attache in Turkey. When he stood to be shot he was 43, slim, his hair touched with gray, his face sensitive and well featured. His rank had been that of colonel. His medals and decorations numbered 11. One was that of the Order of the Red Banner, one of the highest Soviet awards.

The prosecutor charged that Col. Penkovsky maintained a relationship with his Western associates that was more than that of a paid spy. An Englishman, Greville Wynne, British businessman, was sentenced to eight years, five of them at hard labor. He was described as the courier. The courtroom crowd, which applauded the death sentence given Col. Penkovsky, cried out, "Too little; too little," when it heard Wynne's fate. The Soviet people also feel they have not been told what motivated Col. Penkovsky.

Official circles in this country and Britain have said nothing. Nor will they. This is the way of life in the unknown world of intelligence. It generally is conceded that the worst of the many errors in the U-2 case, in which the United States pilot, Francis Powers, was shot down, was the admission by then President Eisenhower that Mr. Powers was, in fact, on an intelligence mission. The Russians had known of previous U-2 flights. Nikita Khrushchev knew of them when he was visiting President Eisenhower at Camp David, and when he planned for the presidential visit to Russia.

Paris Session Broken Up

This was the peak of Mr. Eisenhower's great dream of being an international peace-maker. Mr. Khrushchev had said he did not believe Mr. Eisenhower was aware of the U-2 case. When the president said he was, it drove

Mr. Khrushchev to the fury of demolishing the Paris summit meeting and to the utter destruction of Mr. Eisenhower's sincere ambition to close out his last year as chief executive of this country as a man committed to the advancement of peace.

Did a Good Job

The Soviets, by their silence, have enabled those skilled in the business of reading what is said between the lines, or of hearing what is left unsaid, to deduce that Western intelligence did a very good job — so good, in fact, that the Soviets are shocked and are engaged in a ruthless shake-up and purge of their counter-intelligence apparatus.

Disappearance of Gen. Ivan A. Serov, chief of Soviet Army Intelligence (unexplained at this writing), is a straw in that wind. Another fact to which Western observers attach importance is that British businessman Wynne received a sentence of only eight years — two less than that demanded by the prosecution. It was so little the courtroom crowd registered disapproval and was waved into silence by the judge. Mr. Wynne was the necessary and invaluable courier. The supposition is that he was given a mild sentence because he had co-operated fully with Soviet officials. This means he supplied the names of those he knew to have been implicated in what must have been a very substantial penetration of Soviet intelligence.

The indictment itself said that the successful supply of Soviet secrets to the West, by Col. Penkovsky, via courier Wynne, and others, covered a period of two years and included information about Russian rockets, Russian forces in East Germany, Sino-Russian relationships and other matters. It is highly probable that the Penkovsky case contributed to the toughening of the Soviet attitude and the decision to avoid any agreement whatever in banning atomic testing.

If we recall the U-2 contribution, and surmise what two years of contact with Penkovsky may have produced, we can be sure that Western intelligence has certainly kept pace with the best efforts of the Kremlin apparatus, if, in fact, it has

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